

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested. Claims 7 and 21 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, claims 1-5, 8-20, and 22-25 are pending. Claims 1, 8, 15, and 23 have been amended. New claim 25, which includes the features of previously canceled claim 6, has been added. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added by the amendments to the claims.

Claim 21 stands objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

Claims 1-2 and 7-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,852,434 to Sekendur ("Sekendur"). In response, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to include the features of dependent claim 21, which has been indicated by the Examiner to represent allowable subject matter. Additionally, the feature of a force sensitive detector, which had been added from dependent claim 6 in a previous response, has now been deleted. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 distinguishes over Sekendur and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn. Additionally, claim 2 depends from and further restricts independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Therefore, dependent claim 2 is also deemed to be distinguishable over Sekendur.

Independent claim 8 has been amended to include the features of dependent claim 21, which has been indicated by the Examiner to represent allowable subject matter. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 8 distinguishes over Sekendur and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn.

Claims 3-4 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sekendur as applied to claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,652,412 to Lazzouni et al. ("Lazzouni"). Claims 3-4 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 and therefore also distinguish over Sekendur. In rejecting claims 3-4, the Examiner has further applied Lazzouni. Applicant respectfully submits that Lazzouni fails to cure the deficiencies of Sekendur noted above with respect to independent claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 3-4 distinguish over the cited combination of Sekendur and Lazzouni and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn.

Independent claim 15 has been amended to include the features of dependent claim 21, which has been indicated by the Examiner to represent allowable subject matter. Additionally, the feature from previously canceled claim 6 of a force sensitive detector, which had been added in a previous response, has now been deleted. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 15 distinguishes over the cited combination of Sekendur and Lazzouni and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 15-17, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lazzouni in view of Sekendur. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 23 have each been amended to include the features of dependent claim 21, which has been indicated by the Examiner to represent allowable subject matter. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 23 distinguish over the cited combination of Lazzouni and Sekendur. Claims 3, 5, and 16-17 depend from and further restrict independent claims 1 and 15, respectively, and therefore also distinguish over Lazzouni in view of Sekendur. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 15-17, and 23 be withdrawn.

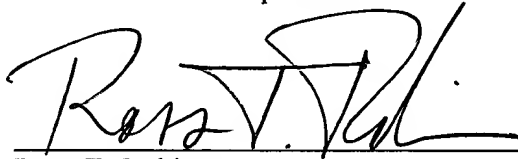
Claims 9-11 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sekendur as applied to claim 8 above, and further in view of GB 2306669 to Wolff et al. ("Wolff"). Claims 9-11 and 13-14 depend from and further restrict independent claims 1 and therefore also distinguishes over Sekendur. In rejecting claims 9-11 and 13-14, the Examiner has further applied Wolff. Applicant respectfully submits that Wolff fails to cure the deficiencies of Sekendur noted above with respect to independent claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 9-11 and 13-14 distinguish over the cited combination of Sekendur and Wolff and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn.

Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any further questions or comments facilitating allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's representative indicated below to further prosecution of this application to allowance and issuance.

In view of the above, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance, and such a Notice is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross T. Robinson", written over a horizontal line.

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